

THE 25th Infantry Division assumed peace-enforcement duties in Bosnia in April, replacing the National Guard's 29th Inf. Div., whose units are based primarily in Virginia and Maryland.

In keeping with Army requirements to rotate the six-month Stabilization Force tour in Bosnia between active-duty and reserve-component commands, the Hawaii-based 25th Inf. Div. is now providing the headquarters elements and a large contingent of troops for SFOR-11. About 51 percent of the force is composed of active-duty troops. The remaining soldiers are from the National Guard and Army Reserve.

There are currently three NATO multinational divisions performing peacekeeping duties in Bosnia. The United States has commanded Multinational Division-North since 1995. Russia, Turkey and Norway are also part of MND-N.



Though patrolling is an important part of the job for soldiers assigned to SFOR, it is just one aspect of the mission.

Bosnia Update

"Initially, they thought the soldiers were frightening, gun-carrying people."

HELPING the people of Bosnia rebuild their lives is a primary goal of the multinational divisions positioned throughout Bosnia.

But as coalition forces patrol the streets, protecting citizens from potential threats from each other, rebel

forces and terrorists, they're also providing medical care, school supplies and drug demand-reduction classes.

The war in Bosnia left some 200,000 people dead or missing over the past decade, and also created a population of orphans.

In the financially ruined country, educating the children has been a priority of U.S. soldiers deployed to Bosnia as part of the SFOR rotations,

This story was compiled from news releases by SSG George Young of the Massachusetts National Guard's State Area Command Public Affairs Office and SPCs Michelle Lunato and Vincent Oliver, both of the 305th Public Affairs Detachment.

so much so that they created a program called "Adopt-A-School."

Among those who have participated in the program is 1LT Mark Guilfoil of the Massachusetts Guard's 104th Inf., who was in Bosnia with some 250 other Massachusetts Guard soldiers with SFOR-10.

"The children aren't allowed to attend school if they don't have something to write with," said Guilfoil. "So they try to get pens from soldiers who patrol their towns."

Under the Adopt-A-School program, a soldier from each rotation volunteers to organize a collection drive for school supplies from his or her hometown and have them sent to Bosnia.

Guilfoil organized a drive at the American Legion Post 107 in Natick, Mass. The Milford Employees Association at Massachusetts National Guard Headquarters in Milford also donated supplies. They were then loaded aboard an aircraft that took the state's adjutant general, BG George Keefe, to Bosnia to visit his Guard soldiers.

When the 25th Inf. Div. came, as part of SFOR-11, 1SG Bruce Robertson of Company B, 1st Battalion, became involved in the program, distributing construction paper, crayons and Rice Krispie Treats.

But it was the soldiers' interaction with the children, not the treats, that quelled their fear of the Americans, said Kuljan Elementary School teacher Trumic Nedret. "Initially, they thought the soldiers were frightening, gun-carrying people."

"The Adopt-A-School program could very well be one of the most important things we do here, as far as interacting with the population at large," Robertson said. "By exposing the children to an outside influence, we're giving them knowledge of different people and cultures." □

SPC Michelle Lunato



Comprehensive eye exams for local citizens was just one mission undertaken by the members of Task Force Medical Eagle during the April civil-action program.

"The people here have very few medical resources available to them. We're truly like ambassadors of good will."

Medical Aid

Medical care is also among SFOR officials' ongoing concerns, because Bosnia's future is dependent upon its people, said COL Princess Facen, chief nurse for Task Force Medical Eagle, which was conducted in April in the village of Krizevici, near Zvornik.

"In order for the children to eventually make a difference in this country, they must be healthy," she said.

The medical civil-action program was especially significant because the village's original clinic was destroyed in the war, Facen said. It was the only outpatient clinic serving some 3,000 people in Krizevici and seven surrounding villages.

"We're trying to show that we're supporting all the people of Bosnia, regardless of their religious beliefs," said CPT Todd Jackson, TFME head emergency-room nurse.

Medical care is part of the peacekeeping mission, Facen said. "Our primary mission is to provide medical care to soldiers deployed with MND-N." But when military medical teams can provide medical services to people in the local communities, they're sending a message to the local population that people in other parts of the world care about them.

"I'm very happy that I was able to receive help without having to pay for it," said Ziba Muminovic, who received medicine for her diabetes and high blood pressure.

"The people here have very few medical resources available to them," said dental specialist SPC Xavier Creekmur. "We're truly like ambassadors of good will." □



The UH-60 air ambulances of the 1085th Medical Company sometimes use their rescue hoists to lift SFOR soldiers out of minefields.

SPC Michelle Lunato

SPC Vincent Oliver

Air Ambulance

With SFOR soldiers operating in many different areas of heavily mined Bosnia, the role of the Army's 1085th Medical Co. is equally significant.

Although soldiers and civilians alike are constantly warned about the dangers of mines and the importance of staying on designated paths or roadways, accidents still occur, said 1085th flight surgeon MAJ Jeffery Anderson,

That's when the 1085th's UH-60 Black Hawk medical-evacuation aircraft arrive on the scene to quickly remove casualties.

The helicopter hovers just above treetop level and a medic descends on a "jungle penetrator," which looks like a small torpedo with seats that flip down and lock into place.

The penetrator can support a litter for casualties who need to be immobilized, or it can hoist people in a sitting position, face-to-face with the medic, said flight medic SSG Bruce Conger.

"We can extract an injured soldier and get him definitive medical care in about 20 minutes," Anderson said. □



Aviation mechanics SPC Robert Evans and SGT Larry Drinnen of the 1085th Med. Co. work on the rotor hub of one of the unit's Black Hawks.

SPC Vincent Oliver



Danish SFOR soldiers stand near an armored ambulance used during a medical-evacuation exercise in which the 1085th Med. Co. participated.



SSG George Young

Massachusetts Guard 1LT Mark Guilfoil displays some of the books and toys donated to Bosnian schools by people in his home town.

Drug Demand Reduction

Just as mine-awareness classes target children to keep them safe, so, too, does a drug-education program started recently by SFOR-11 soldiers from the division engineer section of Headquarters and HQs. Co., 25th Inf. Div.

"The program is not just a 'don't-do-drugs program,'" said SFC Dennis Scott, lead instructor for the "Bee-like me ... bee-drug-free" program. "It's a life-skills program designed to give local children the skills they need to deal with everyday life situations, as well as with the growing illegal drug problem in Bosnia."

Scott, an Army-trained master instructor, was tasked to develop a written training plan to train soldiers who will act as mentors for fifth- and sixth-grade "bees," or student role models. The bees, in turn, act as role models for their peers.

Besides learning how to avoid alcohol and illegal drugs, the students learn how to set goals, communicate effectively and resolve conflicts, Scott said.

The program has had a great impact on the local community, said Gordana Cvelic, a Croatian-born American citizen and teacher who returned to Bosnia as an interpreter. Today she is the liaison between U.S. military officials and local school officials who participate in the program.

The military's presence — whether it be patrolling the streets to keep the peace, or introducing Bosnia's children to cultures in other lands — continues to improve the lives of people tragically affected by war. □

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The security and humanitarian assistance provided to the people of Bosnia by SFOR's soldiers help ensure that peace has a chance to grow in the troubled Balkan nation.